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in Philadelphia. As a general rule the erection of costly institutions does not promote the ends which are anticipated. Workers are far more needed than buildings, though of course for certain work special establishments are needed. I believe no one feels this lack of helpers more keenly than the superintendent of this institution.

The American Methodist Deaconesses have been more successful in the matter of numbers, but they also ask, Where are the helpers, for the fields are ripe for the harvest?

Mrs. Lucy Rider Meyer is the first person who gave practical shape to the Methodist Deaconess work in this country. She and her husband were the principals of the Chicago Training School for City, Home and Foreign Missions, and the Deaconess work just grew out of this. The students who were training for the foreign mission were sent out two afternoons in the week to visit the sick and the poor. It was then that the immense need for constant, devoted work amongst our poorer brethren was fully realized. The work was there; as Mrs. Meyer truly said in an address at Chautauqua, "We talk of our Pilgrim Fathers, but what are we doing for our pagan brothers?"

The third annual Conference of the Deaconesses of the Methodist Episcopal Church was held at Chautauqua. The two previous conferences were held at Chicago and at Ocean Grove. If one may judge by the increase in three years the next Conference will show a very large addition to the numbers both of Deaconesses and of sympathizers. Already there are one hundred in the field, and representatives were present from every large town in the United States. Bishop Thoburn represented six Deaconesses' homes, well established in India. He invited the next Conference to meet in Calcutta, when the place of reunion was under consideration. With all the advances in modern science such a reunion may not be an impossibility in the near future.

M. F. CUSACK.

ART STUDENTS IN ITALY.

IN THE hope of being useful to those of my countrymen who purpose to establish themselves in Italy, either for the study or the practice of art, I offer, by way of suggestion, some views derived from a long residence in Italy in an official capacity, and from an intimate association with many of the most prominent American, foreign, and native painters and sculptors in Florence, Rome, Milan and Naples.

Italy has peculiar advantages for art-training generally, and especially for sculpture. In this regard Florence is second to no other city, not even Rome. The capital of Italy may excel in its galleries of antique sculpture and in the greater commerce of painters and amateurs from all parts of the world, but the student will find it much dearer in rents, labor, and the general cost of living, and it has besides the very serious drawback of insalubrity during several months of the year. Florence, on the contrary, is healthy in all seasons, far cheaper as a residence, and has the decided advantage of being near the celebrated quarries of Carrara and Ceravezza, which supply the finest statuary marble known. Indeed sculptors in America find it greatly to their interest to send their models to Italy to be put into marble or bronze on account of the large saving in the cost, as well as on account of the greater choice of material. The famous bronze foundry of the late Professor Papi

belongs to Florence, and is, I believe, the only one in existence which possesses the secrets and the facilities for casting work of all sizes without joints, and which will not require repairs and chasings afterward. Florence, Rome and Milan have a numerous corps of skilful workmen in all branches of art, many of whom are competent to execute original work of high merit, although they are accustomed to labor for wages such as are given in America to the common mechanic or day laborer.

The advantage of having these well-instructed and capable workmen to execute from the model the conceptions of the legitimate artist is too obvious to be questioned. Although the practice is liable to misconception, in itself it is rightful, economical, and artistic, doubling the executive power of the artist himself, who can reserve his strength for invention, modeling, and finishing, the manual labor proper being left to the individual who makes this department of art his lifelong occupation. An abundance of this sort of highly trained labor of extraordinary cheapness, as compared with charges at other great centres of art, is to be found in Florence.

The history, scenery, associations, and ambitions of Florence are deeply imbued with the sentiments and feelings most suggestive and inciting to the American artist, and which he finds lamentably deficient at home. Consequently, viewing Florence as almost unique in the quality and means of its art training, I am disposed to highly recommend it as a residence for the student. This recommendation, however, must be qualified by stating that it applies to the matured artist or student, rather than to the mere pupil. As regards the elementary studies America now presents sufficient means of instruction, and either London, Paris, Antwerp, Munich, or Dusseldorf, in strictly academic resources and in variety of technical excellence, is superior to Florence or Rome. The youthful American artist should therefore defer going abroad until he has first laid a solid foundation of instruction in his own country, and sufficiently established his artistic constitution on the basis of his own nationality, so as not to become a mere copyist or imitator of other schools and styles. Then he can breathe to advantage the higher atmosphere of the great masters in art.

The student must be prepared for years of hard study and prolonged pecuniary strain. Although living and professional training and practice are cheap, as compared with America, yet it is not less true that the general standard of art excellence, owing to the enlivening presence of the greatest achievements of the past, is of the highest, whilst the concourse of eminent artists of all nationalities makes competition the closest and the prices the least, so that the chances of patronage are less than in America, or England, or France, or even Germany. In Italy the American has not only artists of his own nation as rivals, but those of all Europe; and, besides, art is judged on its own abstract merits. Though the artist may subsist on less money in Italy than in America, he may find it more difficult to earn a franc in the former country than a dollar in the latter. An Italian artist, as a common rule, is content to receive a franc when his American brother would expect fivefold the sum, and frequently for art of less merit in every way.

I should fail in doing my whole duty did I not also point out the noteworthy fact of the inventive faculty of the Italian artists and their facility in adapting themselves and their art to the current taste of American buyers. In this they show great ingenuity, and are able in a considerable degree to place the American artist domiciled in Italy at a great disadvantage.

In two points, however, our American artists more than hold their own. These are in the execution of portrait-busts and statues and of the costly monuments in commemoration of the deeds and results of the late War of the Rebellion. Notwithstanding some of the egregious failures, judged by the strictest principles of art, which unfortunately are to be seen even in the Capital of our nation, our artists display such remarkable aptitude for portraiture of this kind and such constructive skill as to cause some regret that these works might not in general have been deferred until a few years more of instruction on the part of the artists and of growth in public taste—a conjunction that would have called forth better things.

The liberal commissions originating in patriotic feelings, awarded for monuments destined, perhaps, to endure as long as the Republic itself, serve to foster American art in all classes, and conduce to the education of the people in the direction of art. Irrespective of the question of price it is wise and proper that their execution should be intrusted to Americans themselves.

If our artists will thoroughly imbue themselves with American feelings and aspirations, the living ideas and aims of their country, before going abroad, they will be better prepared to appreciate all that Italy offers them, and will, moreover, have a stronger hold on their countrymen in the competition from the artists of all nations. It depends on themselves to rise to the level of their opportunity as conscientious and well trained artists, inspired by a passion for their profession, or to sink to the mere commercial phase, struggling for pecuniary success, reckless of the quality of their work, of the plagiarisms and other makeshifts for getting on rapidly.

With the aim of attaining technical mastery of color and the laws of composition it would be wise to study closely the old masters, as was always done by the great masters of the intermediate schools, like Velasquez, Rubens, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and their contemporaries, a practice which is almost entirely neglected by American painters, who are more ambitious to create art, as it were, anew, in their own work. So far as this tends to original invention it is praiseworthy, but it necessarily retards technical progress.

At the best, the genuine artist has to live long on hopes deferred, before he makes his way to the front; which, if not mistaken in himself, he is certain to do in time. But our American student should not forget that however favorable may be the verdict of partial friends in a country in which there exists no lofty standard of art or public appreciation of it, he makes his new venture in the old world, where knowledge is ripe and opinion most critical. It is a trying ordeal, and often one which, too self-confident on account of his previous career at home, the student is poorly prepared to meet.

With no class of artists is this more evident than with singers, especially young girls, who are obliged to face the pitiless criticisms, the malignant intrigues of the public theatres, under different conditions, as a preliminary step to their successful recognition.

Every year sends more of our country-women to Italy to prepare themselves for the stage, whose qualifications of voice and person, however flattered in America, by no means fit them for a successful career in that country, in which indeed their very sex, instead of being some protection, as in America, is quite the reverse. Their position in the meanwhile is aggravated by their ignorance or disregard of habits and opinions very

foreign to those they have been accustomed to at home. From the outset they are liable to be victimized by being insidiously encouraged by interested persons to pursue, at a heavy expense for years, studies to fit them for the operatic stage, only at last, after paying an extravagant fee for a *début* trial, to utterly fail, either from absolute inability or through the plots of jealous rivals. They may then find themselves destitute in a foreign land, beset by temptations and poverty. Several sad cases of shipwrecked fortunes and character in this class having come to my own personal knowledge, it is my opinion that none, unless she possesses unquestionable talent and voice, and has sufficient means to render her entirely independent of the result, should make this venture in Italy. For every success there are many failures; at the same time, when the conditions are favorable, there is no country that has such great facilities for the training of an opera singer, and the beginning of a successful career.

It is true there have been examples of remarkable and praiseworthy success under most adverse circumstances, due entirely to the energy and ability displayed by the young ladies themselves. In thus plainly presenting the disadvantages and trials which all must more or less meet, I do not wish to discourage anyone from attempting a professional career in Italy, but only to state the adverse facts for the consideration of the persons most interested.

JOHN SCHUYLER CROSBY.

FARM ORGANIZATION.

THE farmer of to-day finds himself the subject of much discussion. By one class of writers it is argued that legislation is to blame for his pitiable condition; by another, that it is the result of his own laziness and improvidence. Let us look at this last charge. How many farmers are there who do not spend the most of the working days in hard toil? It seems to my observation, at least, that it is not more work and less leisure that is needed, but more intelligence, more time spent in the cultivation of the mind and in the study of right methods. We hear argued on every side that in the trades intelligent laborers accomplish more work with less expenditure of time and energy than ignorant, uninformed workmen. If this is true in manufactories, it is equally true in agriculture. The fact that a man resides in the country and gets his living by working in harmony with nature and nature's laws is not a just reason for shutting him out from the world of intellectual effort.

We would not think that the farmer of this country, in order to become successful in obtaining a comfortable living, to care for his own and add to the welfare of his country, must have his eyes forever fastened on his task and his thoughts directed to nothing beyond or above it. The man who has worked from sunrise to sunset five days in the week has a right to spend the sixth as he chooses. But if he be helped to the cultivation of intellect and taste, to the spirit of inquiry, and be put in the way of general culture, then indeed will his holidays—his few hours of rest—be well spent.

He has lately awakened to the fact that while labor in every other department is organized, while the combinations of capital are firm and invincible, he alone depends upon himself; and here lies his much extolled independence. He alone is at the mercy of all others, and to become able to compete in a fair field with his oppressor he must unite with those who are